

SPECIAL MEETING

CRANSTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 1, 2006

WESTERN HILLS MIDDLE SCHOOL

400 PHENIX AVENUE

EXECUTIVE SESSION: 7:00 P.M.

**IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWED BY PUBLIC SCHOOL
COMMITTEE MEETING**

MINUTES

A special meeting of the Cranston School Committee was held on the evening of the above date at Western Hills Middle School with the following members present: Mr. Archetto, Mrs. Greifer, Ms. Iannazzi, Mr. Lupino, Mr. Palumbo (arrived at 7:15 p.m.), Mr. Stycos, and Mr. Traficante. Also present were Mrs. Ciarlo, Mr. Votto, Mr. Balducci, Mr. Nero, and Mr. Laliberte.

The meeting was called to order at 7:10 p.m.

The roll was called and the Pledge of Allegiance conducted.

Mr. Lupino noted for the record that no Executive Session was held.

I. Public Hearing

a. Students (Agenda-Non-agenda Items)

b. Members of the Public (Agenda Matter Only)

Samantha Mattera, 11th Grade Cranston West Student – She stated that she has been playing hockey since she was five and now she is seventeen. This year she tried out for the boys' high school team at West and made the JV team, but she was always interested in playing girls' high school hockey as well as college hockey. There hasn't been a team for West, and she would like to see a team happen. There are enough girls from East and West to make up a team. They had a summer team, and that was successful. There are a lot of girls who get together and practice with other teams just to have ice, and they are trying to get a team together.

Erin Utalogue, Cranston High School East Student – She stated that she is a junior. She played girls' hockey during the summer, and she has never played any other high school sport. She really enjoyed it and felt very a part of it. The girls all feel that way. It was an experience she will never forget in her lifetime. She would like to do it again this winter because she would like to tell her kids about it. Maybe they will like hockey too. Girls' ice hockey is definitely growing, and the school district should start to look into it now. The girls can definitely fund raise. They have been there to go canning every day that they were assigned, no matter how cold it was. The girls are really dedicated to it, and would really love it if the committee could give them a team.

Mark Lucas, Riverfarm Road – He requested that the City Council people be given an opportunity to speak before him.

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Mr. Lupino recognized Councilmen Fung, Barone, Garabedian, and Councilwoman McFarland.

City Councilwoman Paula McFarland – She thought that some of her statements had been read into the record. This evening she knew the committee had a difficult task of submitting a budget that will have a review by the Mayor, and probably will see further cuts when it goes before the City Council. The committee does not have any funding that has been allocated by the State of Rhode Island through the General Assembly nor do they have any funding by the City Council. It is important to note that the committee should let the parents and children know who are present at this meeting that \$11 million may have additional cuts and may not have funding for other programs. She knows that the hot topic has been closing an elementary school, and it is a shame to close any school. She knows they went through this with Norwood Avenue School, and Horton School has been on the chopping block for the past couple of years. Obviously, they could have done a much better job of closing schools and doing away with classrooms by either redistricting the school system or by a slow process of moving students out as they graduate from the school instead of the process of every year shutting an elementary

school in a small community that actually achieves much better than obviously larger schools and larger classrooms. She asked that the committee do their due diligence this evening even if they have to stay all evening to do that but make sure they make decisions that are broad based and don't increase or create new programs that would put a burden on the system. When the committee goes out into the public and tells them that they have to close a school or remove a program, they can't create new ones. They can't start spending money on new things or new initiatives without taking care of the people they are currently supposed to represent. Please insure that they keep the children in mind because they are number one.

Councilman Allen Fung – He told the committee they know how he feels about many of the situations; he has been here before in support of the parents at Horton and also not forgetting many of the other schools that are a part of the eastern side and also the western side where many of the people are talking about the compaction problems that have impacted them in the past and potentially will impact them in the future. Everyone knows the committee has difficult decisions, but these broad based decisions come down to the difficult decisions they will have tonight. Those allocations have to be done wisely through a thought-out process which takes into consideration all of the children's impact throughout the city in each of the different wards crisscrossing this city. There are a lot of different people who will be impacted by it. It is not an easy decision and it will come down to the Mayor and the Council as well. He asked

the committee to do their due diligence on a lot of these numbers. He would strongly support many of the recommendations that Mr. Archetto and Mr. Stycos and many of the others had put forward. Those are serious, hard-look numbers that the committee has to consider throughout this budgetary process. Those are the numbers that the Council will be looking at as well on the Council level. He asked them to please take the numbers seriously.

Councilman Barone – He recognized Mr. Palumbo and noted that he was glad Mr. Palumbo was present. He told the committee that he knew the committee had a big job

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ahead of them. Everyone has said that they can't wait until it is over, but it is only the beginning. He hoped that the committee has looked at every line item. He hoped that they have analyzed every line item and did the due diligence, as Councilman Fung had said. In the past Mr. Barone had recommended looking at a couple of different issues. He will bring them up at the time of the budget hearing in front of the City Council. He knew that there were qualified people who will do a great job. The Council has a lot of faith in them, and it will all start with the committee tonight.

Council President Aram Garabedian, 173 Belvedere Drive – He stated that there are a number of people who have sent him e-mails and

communication and caught him at different locations telling him that he has to show up and make a statement on certain issues. Having served six years on the School Committee which is a non-paid job, he can't think of a more difficult area to deal with than the closing of a school. Having lived in this city since 1962, he has seen Norwood Avenue, Valentine Almy, Rhodes, Meshanticut, Sanders, and now Horton. In his own neighborhood of Glen Hills, there were mostly Garden Hills' children and Glenwood children. As their neighborhood got older, the children are now bused in from other areas. There is no more difficult subject to deal with, both emotional and stress related. He has a difficult time talking about the subject because years ago in the 70's they talked about regionalizing school district, and it is being talked about again. He led a big charge for the neighborhood school. They had a rally at Cranston Stadium of 3,000 people, and they killed the idea because it was anti-neighborhood. He can't speak from both sides of his mouth and expect the Council, and they have said publicly that they want the committee to watch their tax dollars; they want them to be prudent, and at the same time come to the microphone stating that they should not do it. However, he came to this meeting telling the committee that they are far more knowledgeable at this stage of the game of their own budget. Wherever the committee can, the maintenance of the neighborhood school is probably the cornerstone and strength of this city. People who come to live here really check the schools out. It seems to him that after looking at the numbers of the per pupil expenditure and the pupil teacher ratios that develop when the children from Horton are

merged with the children of Woodridge, they appear to be in the lower grade quite healthy with Woodridge becoming 19 and 18 in Grade 1; Grade 2 20 and 19; Grade 3 he thought there was a mistake. On the projected enrollment it states 41 and 16 are 57, but at the end it shows only 25 and 26 which means it is a little healthier than that. In Grades 4, there are 23 and 22; in Grades 5 there are 27 and 26 which is the healthiest. For Stadium, there are 15 and 14; 24 and 23, 16 and 19, 24 and 24, 27 and 27. Some of the parents won't like to hear that when his child went to school in Cranston there were 35 and 36 in a class. These numbers are wonderful, and he promoted the idea as a School Committee member for mandatory Kindergartens in the state and achieved that with a statewide law and also got involved in a uniform Kindergarten day for kids. He put his time in for Kindergarten through grade 4 especially. Pupil teacher ratios are very important. He read in the newspaper today that there is currently a piece of legislation for people who live in Section 8 housing. A landlord, after owning the property for so many years, has a right to move those people out. There is a state law that gives these people a two-year window and forewarns them. It seems reasonable to him that a family who lives in a district that when a major thing like this happens that it would not be unusual that there be a formal policy of the school board where an official

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notice of one year would be given before a school would shut down

officially. It seemed reasonable to him that in attempts to reduce the costs which is the committee's job, and this is not an easy one; it is the most difficult job they can do, try to do what they can. He believed that the parents are entitled to an official notice of a minimum of one year. However, he knows what the committee is facing. If he were sitting in their position, he would be torn on closing the school and at the same time he knows the heat is on all of the committee members relative to taxes. He hopes everyone can get through this. His position is that the committee has to move in a direction of what makes sense in saving dollars, but he did think this may take place in other schools along the way. Parents are entitled to some notice with a minimum of one year so that they can plan their lives. While everyone is interested in saving money, the committee should save what they can in the budget. If they can give a one-year notice and adopt a policy in the future for another elementary school closing, it won't be the worst thing. There will be a process and procedure developed.

Councilwoman Fogarty, Ward 2 – Mrs. Fogarty stated that she and the committee have been together a lot through this process along with Councilmen Barone and Fung. The committee all knows her position on Horton. She is a real advocate for neighborhood schools. She was a little surprised by a comment that Superintendent Ciarlo made at the last meeting that Mrs. Fogarty was for closing them unless it was in her own backyard. That is not true. She felt that the system in Cranston works very well. In the news today, Providence, in trying to

improve their schools, has decided that it is the route to go. She would hate to see Cranston change what they have done in creating these great schools. She has heard no conversation from this committee regarding her suggestion of doing it through an attrition process. Let the 5th graders go on to Bain; don't take in a Kindergarten class, and do 5th, 4th, 3rd, 2nd, and 1st for the coming school year. Each year, the committee will gain a 25% savings in their budget until it is closed. That is what she would prefer as a last resort. She asked the committee, when they come before the City Council, to focus on consolidating the titles in the budget so that the City Council can get a true picture of cost. She is trying to lay out the schedule for budget hearings, and with all that is going on with the School Committee, she thought it best to give them an opportunity to come before the City Council twice. She will schedule the School Committee early on in the hearings, and perhaps that will generate a lot of questions and recommendations and have the committee back, if need be, later on in the four to six week sessions. The Council will get the budget March 30, and they will start the hearings almost immediately. She would like numbers of positions within the different job titles and functions of people who are not at the top of their step who will be getting a step increase in the next budget so that the Council can get a real picture of what the actual salaries are going to cost.

Mark Lucas, 28 Riverfarm Road – Mr. Lucas read a written statement as follows: I've simply lost track of the number of times I have stood

before you to make my case to keep Horton open. Each time I've used a different approach to get my point across – that closing Horton is not in the best interests of the children, the neighborhood, the school system, or the taxpayers. Sadly, I don't think I'm getting through to you. I keep hearing from Mr. Traficante and Mrs. Greifer and Mr. Lupino and Ms. Iannazzi that they don't want to close Horton, but I've seen nothing from them to back up their words. Talk

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is cheap, and your actions speak volumes about our intent – whether you like it or not that is what the perception is. And I don't care how Mr. Lupino tried to spin it, but by passing a budget tonight that does not include Horton; the School Committee will be essentially killing our high-performing neighborhood school. Contrary to what you said in the paper, Mr. Lupino, it is not the fairest thing to do. Trying to get funding for Horton back into the budget will be a tremendous uphill battle, but we will continue to fight the good fight and we will show our children what real leaders do for their community. When the Save Horton amendment is before you tonight, I expect Mr. Traficante and Mr. Palumbo to recuse themselves due to an obvious conflict of interest as board members of the Construction Career Academy. Furthermore, I would expect Ms. Iannazzi to recuse herself due to an obvious conflict of interest stemming from her father's leadership position within the union that runs the Academy. Since Ms. Iannazzi still lives at home with her father and derives support from him, their

finances are intertwined. Every elected official worth their salt knows they must avoid even the appearance of impropriety. But that's a tall order here in Cranston, where 3 of the 7 school committee members have financial ties to the school department. While they may recuse themselves from voting on certain issues... Mr. Lupino interrupted and asked Mr. Lucas to please keep his comments to the resolution. The resolution is the adoption of the operating budget. This is not a political forum. He was not here to attack any of the members that are present. If he continued to do that, Mr. Lupino would ask him to leave. If he wanted to talk about what the administration has recommended to this body as far as what the committee is supposed to do with this money, then he could do that. Any personal attacks are not for this venue. Mr. Lucas apologized for taking the closing of Horton as a personal issue, but it is a personal issue. Mr. Lupino stated to Mr. Lucas that he was not saying it wasn't a personal issue. Mr. Lucas was making personal attacks on the members. If he had some constructive items to present to the committee or if he had another \$1 million up his sleeve, the committee would welcome it. Mr. Lucas told Mr. Lupino that he has already discussed some of the things the committee could look at to save money. Mr. Lucas continued as follows: The closure of Horton is not simply a neighborhood issue – it affects not only Wards 2 and 3, but rather the entire city. Cranston has been known throughout the state as having a very solid school system. Closing high-performing schools without first exploring any other cost saving options sends a message of instability and recklessness to those considering relocating to

Cranston. Over the next two years, the school department will be facing at least \$9M and \$8M budgetary shortfalls...will the next two smallest elementary schools be the next ones to be closed? Or maybe you'll target one in Mr. Stycos' ward out of spite. When will it end? I believe there are millions of dollars of savings that could be realized if the School Committee would only show some guts and take control of this school system and run it with their collective mind focused on two things – doing no harm to the children, and always acting in the best interests of the taxpayer. You may choose to close Horton Elementary School, using whatever logic that you wish, but you will never crush the Horton spirit. Thank you; don't kill Horton.

Susan Adler, 20 Riverfarm Road – She stated that she didn't realize that this quote she found tonight was pretty appropriate after Mr. Lucas's remarks and after Mr. Lupino's comment. It is a quote by Robert Frost; "Education is the ability to listen to

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almost anything without losing your temper." Her friends know that she is a very big movie buff, and in a Few Good Men when Tom Cruise's character says to Jack Nicholson's character when he was up there on trial, he said, "You want the truth? You can't handle the truth." All of the people sitting here from the Horton family, the students, and the Council people can handle the truth. She told the committee at the first meeting that all the parents want is the truth.

They want honesty. When they were at the meeting on Monday evening, the parents asked during the intermission if the topic about Horton was going to be discussed, and one of the School Committee members said that it wasn't going to be discussed. She was a little disappointed that they were told no, and when they woke up the next morning and read the newspaper, they found that it was discussed. She felt that everyone was trying to keep this honest for the most part and respectful. When the schools had their last snow day, her daughter woke up, and she told her that schools were closed. Her daughter's first reaction was, not because it was snowing, she said they have closed Horton. She told her daughter that they didn't close Horton but rather they closed all of the schools because of the snow. It is very hard to know that this is what her child was saying, and she repeated it to her teacher. Everyone knows that it was a truthful statement. She has spoken about her daughter in the past, and she is in special education. Mrs. Adler has been listening week after week to parents talk with pride about all of their children. Her special education class will compare to the honors classes at Cranston West that are in jeopardy of closing. To take away the security of these students at Horton, regardless of the fact that they are in special education or not, is so hurtful to them. Her daughter last year couldn't read. This year, due to her teachers, she is able to read. With excitement she came home after spending a day at school saying that she wanted to read a certain book. She read the whole book, Green Eggs and Ham. Some people may think it is a simple book, but to a second grader who has special needs, this is quite an

accomplishment. The teachers are working 24/7 because Mrs. Lataille's remark to her was "did she pronounce her s's. If her daughter was here tonight, she would pronounce her s's quite well: Save Our School. Those would be her s's for tonight. She wished more parents and students were here tonight, but again tomorrow is a school day. They asked the people who were here tonight to represent them. Everyone has been saying that this is a hard decision; it is not a hard decision for them. Please don't close Horton. The parents can't get any more. She commented to Mr. Lupino that even though she and Mr. Lucas may disagree on this a little, they asked him after the Bain meeting to do what is fair. She could understand Mr. Lupino's frustration by saying just close the school because the parents are all frustrated and tired. The parents will never be tired if the committee closes Horton. The spirit will always be there because it is the lessons that all the children have learned over the years. Those who have graduated and are in Bain, Cranston East, Cranston West, and possibly the Charter School, Horton will always be with them. It is the lessons they have learned. As her son said to the committee the first night, his best friends in sixth grade are his best friends since Kindergarten. She and Mrs. Stadelbauer laugh about it because when their kids were in first or second grade they said they were going to college together and room together; and they will. They formed this lifelong friendship at Horton. It is a hard decision, but it is going to be a harder task for the parents to go home and tell the children that the people they voted in have disappointed them. Mrs. Adler went on further to say that Henry

B. Adams said “A teacher effects eternity; he

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can never tell where his influence stops.” Shut their doors – that influence will not stop. Keep them open, keep a generation going. She was a little embarrassed that some of the committee members couldn’t look her in the eye while she is speaking. She quoted Horace Mann: “Education then beyond all other devices of human origin is the great equalizer of the conditions of man, the balance wheel of social machinery.” That machinery for all of them is Horton School. They don’t want that machinery to close. It is not a factory of producing students; it is a place where there has been acceptance. The committee saw that in the presentation that the teachers put together. The committee is in a hard position tonight, but think about the position the parents are in year after year. They hope that when the committee goes to sleep tonight and they put their heads on their pillows, they will think about the students. The parents know it is a hard decision. Please make the right decision. Ben Franklin said: “Genius without education is like silver in the mind.”

Lori Stadelbauer, 39 Orlando Avenue – She stated that as a parent of a student at Horton and a graduate of Horton, she is done and toasted. The committee has total burned her of the fight to keep Horton open. She told the committee that if they do close the school that they should be at the school on May 31st at 10:00 a.m. to tell 132

kids why the school is being closed and then in September when they see all little pre-schoolers or any other kids that are put in that school why they are there. She is a realist, and she knows the committee will close the school. This is the third time she has been through this. Her oldest is eleven years old, and her youngest is nine years old. She doesn't care any more; close it. It is her opinion; it might not be the others opinion, but it is hers. She can't do this any more with her son. He deserves a good education. There are six children in her family, and they have all been through the city school system. Not once did they ever fight to keep a school system, and it is not fair to her son. Mrs. Stadelbauer referred to Mr. Lupino's quote in the Cranston Herald, "Let's close this; let's get it over with and be done with it." She commented, then do it. Let's move on. It's ridiculous. It's a constant fight. She asked if the committee needs to close it; probably not. The committee has been after this building for years, and she thought it was just the building they want which is sad. If they do close it, she will send an invitation to everyone of them, and she wants them all there on May 31st at 10:00 a.m. at Horton School to explain to the kids why they are closing their school and why in September the pre-school program will be there. It is not fair. She told Ms. Iannazzi that next year when the parents come to a meeting complaining about overcrowding at Woodridge, she asked if she would do something. She told Ms. Iannazzi, probably not.

Andre Arrujo, 20 Stevens Road – He stated that his daughter, Emma, attends Horton School. He is a product of Rhode Island Public

Schools in Pawtucket and East Providence. He went to CCRI after that. He wanted to go to URI but couldn't afford it. He enlisted in the US Air Force and continued to serve in the Air National Guard. He is employed as a federal employee with the Navy in Newport. He has a wife and daughter and is very lucky. He has a home and is active with his church. He is very content with his lot in life and extremely happy. He has reached the American dream, but now he is witnessing the disassembling of that dream; and it starts with a school going away. Taking away the school is the first thing. He asked what would be next; he was afraid to

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find out. America is the greatest nation on Earth. Surely they can afford this small school. If not, shame on this committee and shame on this city.

II. Consent Calendar / Consent Agenda

There were no items under the consent calendar.

Mr. Lupino stated that the committee would establish a bottom line budget figure to be presented to the Mayor by tomorrow morning or sometime tomorrow. This is not the final number. As everyone well

knew, many of them knew that it wasn't until two months ago that the 05-06 budget had come to a final number. With regard to comments that were made, this budget was passed on to the committee by administration. This administration has a very very excellent track record. Some were here when Commissioner Peter McWalters was here and stated that Cranston had the best school system in the state. They have a track record; they presented a budget last year for 05-06 and said that this is what is needed to run the schools. Mr. Palumbo and Mr. Traficante went through it with a fine toothcomb and presented it to this body. They stood behind it and still stand behind it. It went through the same process it will go through again. They have cut it, and the City Council added to that but still cut it. The Mayor held to his bottom line number. It wasn't until an unbiased third party analyzed it and said the committee was right that they do need the money. This administration has given the committee no reason to question the integrity of what they intend to do. This committee has scrutinized it. There have been many meetings and notes back and forth about the different line items. The difficulty in reading some of it has nothing to do with the committee. It has to do with the way the numbers need to be presented.

Mr. Lupino asked for any amendments concerning the number. He also asked Mr. Balducci to give to the committee the newly adjusted figure for the budget. This is after the adjustments for the Horton School line item. Mr. Balducci stated that this evening the committee has a budget that totals \$129,373,206.00. That reflected total savings as they apply to Horton of approximately of \$791,000. If the

committee recalls, when the Horton Plan was distributed at one of the recent meetings, that figure was revised down to \$742,000 and some odd dollars. He was proposing an adjustment increasing the budget by approximately \$48,950 bringing it to \$129,422,156. At that point, he would start from there.

III. Action Calendar / Action Agenda

IV.

RESOLUTION

ADMINISTRATION

BUSINESS

NO. 06-3-5 - RESOLVED, that the 2006-2007 Operating Budget, as recommended by the Superintendent, be approved.

Moved by Mr. Traficante and seconded by Mr. Palumbo that this Resolution be adopted.

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Mr. Traficante stated that the committee recognized tonight two young ladies who participated for several years in girls' hockey in the City of Cranston. They appeared before the committee to encourage them to support secondary girls' hockey. He had the opportunity, along with Mr. Lupino, to meet with this group of young ladies and

their parents on several occasions as well as the Athletic Director. Mr. Traficante called upon the Athletic Director to explain to the committee the conversation, the meetings, and forums that have taken place with this particular group and also the meeting the Athletic Director had with the Interscholastic League regarding the possibility of forming a Cranston team in girls' hockey. Following Athletic Director Traficante's report, he would like to make a motion to move some money to support that endeavor.

Athletic Director Traficante stated that at the request of Mr. Lupino and the parents, they met at the Briggs Building to discuss the possibility of adding girls' hockey to the City of Cranston. Himself and Mr. Smith, after meeting with the parents, made a presentation to the RI Interscholastic League asking permission to enter as a co-op team. A co-op team means they would join Cranston High School West along with Cranston High School East to form one Cranston team. The problem with doing that is the district would violate the co-op rule. The rule for adding co-op programs to the State of Rhode Island Interscholastic Sports is that the enrollment of the two schools that are getting together cannot exceed the enrollment of the largest school in the State of Rhode Island which last year at this time was East Providence High School, and this coming year it will be Woonsocket. With Cranston West approaching 2,000 students next year and Cranston East not far behind, the district clearly violates that co-op rule. He asked for a waiver of that rule. He and Mr. Smith went to the waiver hearing, and they appeared in front of fifteen

principals and/or vice principals of the RI Interscholastic League and stated their case. They both left that meeting with a good feeling of their presentation as to how it was going to be received. They received a phone call the next morning as promised, and they were denied. Mr. Mazzanotti, the Director of the Interscholastic League, said to him that the presentation was solid, people listened, and in his opinion that if they had come forth three or four weeks earlier, the answer may have been yes. That is pretty much why they were denied last year. He was asked to come up with some sort of budget as best he could estimate the cost of a co-op team if they were to be waived into the league. He also has the feeling that if they ask for a waiver hearing they will appear in front of fifteen to nineteen principals, there may be eight to ten different people there so he is not saying because he felt good last time with his presentation that because there will be different people there, he doesn't know what their train of thought will be. They would have to go through that process once again.

Mrs. Ciarlo asked what the budget looks like, and Mr. Traficante responded that he had more questions than answers. With regard to the ice rink, he has been told as late as today by Parks Director Bob Clarkin that they anticipate the rink re-opening and being operational May 1st so that is good news. As far as the budget is concerned, they would need a coach, and there is a seven-step coaching tier. He entered a coach as mid range at fourth step. He put in an assistant coach with twenty-four girls at step one. There would also be a \$900

fee to pay to the Interscholastic League which would cover the cost of the schools for the officials. They charge up front, and this year it was \$900 for the girls' teams. It may go up a slight bit. There are supplies and materials which are

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a lot of the disposable items such as tape, ice packs, bandages, hockey pucks, and hockey socks. With regard to equipment, when he put this budget together, he tried to create it as equal to the boys' budget. He is buying less and less equipment only because he finds the boys have been playing hockey since they were five and many of them have their own equipment. He can't buy just one kind of helmet now because they all like a different kind. So, the players pretty much buy their own. The same holds true for gloves. He doesn't buy a whole lot for the boys. He buys just the shell pants for the boys to wear. If he had to purchase a good number of helmets, gloves, shells, he would anticipate that he could probably get it done for \$4,000. Regarding ice time, they have a very unique situation in Cranston where the boys' teams at East and West do not pay for ice time. The city has a reciprocal agreement with the rink; they provide some services for free ice. The boys get between 80 and 90 minutes per day Monday through Friday a piece for ice, prime time from 2:20 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. depending. He asked if they would do that if they put a third team into the mix, he didn't know. Assuming that they don't, taking an estimated price for ice rental, it is \$150.00 per hour

which at 90 minutes per day the boys get, it would be \$225.00 per day which is \$900.00 per week with a thirteen week season, it would amount to \$11,700 just for ice. Transportation is probably the least expensive item. With a sixteen-game schedule, eight of them being away and the hockey games being played at night, they are able to use school department buses which can be estimated at \$20.00 per hour per run guaranteed four hours, it is \$80.00 per run for transportation amounts to \$640.00. All together the budget would be approximately \$21,700. Mrs. Ciarlo stated that she won a bicycle, and it is valued between \$1,500 and \$2,000. She told the girls on the hockey team that she would be happy to donate it, and she would match another \$2,000 if she could find the money. People need to encourage kids of all ages to really do it.

Mr. Traficante added that with regard to the waiver hearing, while he was encouraged by the response to their presentation, he did think that if Cranston is allowed to enter the Interscholastic League as a co-op team, they would put a time limit on it, be it two or three years where they will say the district has two or three years to have both these programs to stand on their own. If one does, then that is it. He doesn't think that they would allow the district to have a co-op program for more than three years. If they go to that third team, someone will be practicing at 5:00 a.m. in the morning because they will not be getting ice from 2:20 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. At 5:00 a.m. in the morning, they rent the ice for approximately \$1.75 per hour to Bay View and LaSalle Academy only because there is no place else to go.

There are forty-five teams playing in Rhode Island, and there are only nine rinks.

School Committee member Traficante stated that he had the breakdown, and it comes to approximately \$21,700, but since he has spoken with several people from the girls' hockey program who are involved in the program, the girls would not be practicing four nights a week or mornings a week; they will be practicing twice a week so the ice time is cut back. He felt that \$20,000 would suffice for the program. In his motion that he will be making, he will not be increasing the bottom line of the budget. He will be asking this committee to remove \$20,000 from the middle school sports program, and \$70,000 can certainly support a comprehensive middle school sports program in order to supply the girls' hockey team with the necessary monies to compete at the interscholastic level of

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the secondary level. Right now there is no middle school sports program; therefore, \$70,000 is a tremendous enhancement to that program.

Mr. Traficante moved to remove \$10,000 from the Bain Middle School account and \$10,000 from the Park View Middle School account for the \$20,000 to support the girls' ice hockey program. He noted that some could be taken from the Western Hills Middle School account

as well so that it would be divided equally among the schools.

Mrs. Greifer asked Mr. Traficante, Athletic Director, how the district stands with regard to equity for its Title 9 compliance. Mr. Traficante responded that the district has to respond once a year on this issue. The last two years the district has received positive feedback from them. The district is doing fine, but it could do better. They have received no complaints from them with regard to their lack of progress in this regard. The district just added girls' lacrosse at an interscholastic league level at Cranston West, so they have made strides for the five years he has been here in that direction. Mr. Lupino noted that what skews the district is football. There are large numbers which is predominantly a male sport. Mr. Traficante added that the three things that hurt the district with regard to Title 9, and that is the size of the football program with addressing over 200 boys, both schools have vibrant wrestling programs with 80 boys, and the Cranston East and West band both hurt athletics a great deal because they both have huge programs. A lot of the girls who may be playing sports at those two schools are deeply involved with the band program. The school department is in good graces with them. Mr. Lupino noted that the girls' ice hockey would enhance the program.

Mr. Palumbo asked that if they take all of this together, and Mr. Traficante had mentioned that it would not increase the bottom line at all, would it leave enough to do middle school sports. He noted that the committee had sort of promised the Mayor, and he would not

want to go back on his word. Mr. Traficante responded that the last time the district had middle school sports, it cost the district \$97,000 to run the fall, winter, and spring seasons at the three schools. That was three years ago. The coaches are making more money; the officials are being paid more money, and things cost two years more. He doesn't think that \$97,000 would fund middle school sports this year. He believed that \$90,000 was allocated in this budget toward middle school sports. While \$6,000 remained in each middle school intramural program, and money might have been taken from that if middle sports were put back in and leave them less money for intramurals. With that amount of money, they would get only half way through the winter.

School Committee member Traficante asked if the \$6,000 still remaining in the intramural programs for each of the middle schools is in addition to the \$90,000 for middle school sports, and Athletic Director Traficante responded that \$90,000 was allocated for middle school sports and \$6,000 per school which comes to \$108,000. School Committee member Traficante said that if they institute a full middle school sports program then intramurals would be cut back, and the Athletic Director said yes.

Mr. Palumbo said that he is not against girls' hockey, but again everything comes down to the finances. He wants to be sure that come the time when they want to get

something started, they have the money to do it. Mr. Traficante, Athletic Director, stated that if the district can't fund it they shouldn't do it.

Mr. Stycos asked what the Title 9 numbers were, and Athletic Director Traficante indicated that the district may be at a 66-34 with boys to girls. He asked Mr. Stycos to keep in mind the size of the football and wrestling programs and the fact that the district doesn't have freshmen sports for girls in any sport where the district does have baseball, football and basketball for boys, and the reason they don't have them for girls is because they don't have the numbers to warrant it. In softball and basketball, the numbers don't warrant it. They are barely cutting kids for the JV program so that does hurt as well.

Mr. Stycos indicated that he had a couple of suggestions. He indicated to the Athletic Director that he had given the committee a memo last year that indicated that if the district eliminated non-league games for all sports, which would be taking a little from all sports, that would save about \$11,000. He believed they had about \$3,000 in athletic awards at the both schools total, so there is \$14,000 that spreads around the sacrifice. The district is way behind on girls' sports so he didn't know if School Committee member Traficante could incorporate those two numbers.

Mr. Traficante stated that he would accept it as a friendly amendment.

The Athletic Director stated that he was not advocating anything at the expense of taking something away. It took him three years to get awards back in. The Cranston East football team just won the state championship, and he spent \$1,100 on plaques. They deserve the plaques. He has only \$1,500 in the account. Cranston West is on the verge of winning four state championships this winter, and \$1,500 won't even cover that. If the committee wants to do away with that, it is fine. He always said that he doesn't want to add anything until the district can fully afford what they have. If they can't afford it, please don't tell him to take away from the athletic program, which is not adequately funded as it is. He is not advocating hockey if the committee is going to tell him to take it from some place else because they don't have the money to do it. If they are going to take it from here to put it over there to make the ice thinner, he wouldn't advocate that.

Mr. Lupino referred to Mr. Stycos's comment regarding the non-league games, and asked if it was conceivable, however, being that it is \$11,000, that teams could use their own funds for non-league games. The golf team goes away; the baseball team is going away this year from West, and they raise their own funds for that. The JV ice program at West is not funded; they raise their own funds. He

asked how many teams were included in the \$11,000. Mr. Traficante responded that every varsity program is allowed to pay X number of league games, and then they are given a cap. As a rule, if a team plays eighteen league games, they would allow them to play twenty-four so it would give a team an opportunity to play six non-league games. Mr. Lupino noted that the hockey team at West used to play in tournaments, but they did not do that this year. They used their fund raising to support the JV program because it was such a big program. He asked if the \$11,000 would not affect the program because they could possibly raise

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their funds for that. In response, Mr. Traficante said that if the district wants their athletes to go out and raise money to play a sport then that would do good. He asked that when they are playing a non-league game at home and he has to provide an event staff per interscholastic league rule and he charges \$3.00 to get into a basketball game could he keep the money or give it to the basketball team if they are paying for the officials, the custodial overtime, and gym rental. The committee would be asking them to raise the money to play, but Mr. Traficante is going to keep the money at the gate. He stated that he is the athletic director, and he is 100% sports. He commented that he loves it and advocates for a full slate for both schools, but he doesn't want to put an addition on his house until he can afford his house. Don't make the ice thinner. He sincerely

believes that athletic programs at East and West are getting better, and they are winning more championships because they are keeping the kids in the city. They are losing fewer and fewer kids to Bishop Hendricken and LaSalle. They are staying home in Cranston and playing because they are being offered a good program. If the committee takes away non-league games, they may lose the blue chip kid. He again reiterated that he would hate to add something at the expense of taking away from someone else.

School Committee member Traficante indicated that if the district has a full slate of middle school sports, there is going to be a tremendous reduction in intramurals, and the Athletic Director indicated that he was right. School Committee member Traficante said that there is \$18,000 that they have to play with. He would much rather see the \$18,000 going to the girls' hockey when there is a full slate of sports at the middle school. He further commented that he was a football coach for several years, and he paid for his own awards. They raised money for the kids to have awards and jackets. He never depended on the school department, so the coaches should do likewise. He asked why the district pay \$3,000 for awards. The Athletic Director responded that with the \$3,000 he also has to buy the school letters at \$4.95 each and he buys 100 every year. Of that \$1,500, \$500 goes for the C's that they put on their jackets. They do not buy jackets or sweatshirts. The policy in the Athletic Department is if a team wins a division championship or a state championship, he buys a plaque, and he buys letters for any athlete who gets their varsity letter.

Mr. Archetto stated that it seemed they were robbing Peter to pay Paul. It was his understanding that the committee appropriated \$90,000 to the middle school sports program, and there is \$18,000 in escrow for the three middle schools. The ice hockey team will cost \$20,000. He asked the Athletic Director if the committee creates a girls' ice hockey team for both high schools for \$20,000, did he see the middle school sports program at risk, and Mr. Traficante responded that it would not be at risk if they are allowed to take that intramural money and put it into middle school sports. If they are going to take \$20,000 from middle school sports to fund hockey, it is a risk. If they have the \$18,000, and it will get pushed over, then it will be a wash.

Mrs. Ciarlo asked if the intramural sports in the middle schools have been beneficial especially for those kids who don't make teams with interscholastic sports, and Mr. Traficante said that the feedback he gets is that it is very beneficial to those kids who would not normally make the team, but the kids who would have made the team really

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aren't interested because while intramurals does build camaraderie in the school community, it doesn't have that competitive edge that the kids who would have made a team are looking for. Mrs. Ciarlo added that in other words it would be nice to have both. Mr. Traficante

commented that in past years, even when they had middle school sports, there was something available for intramurals. Mr. Nero said there was \$2,000 per school available. He commented that they have been dealing with this with the Wellness Committee. If the middle schools go back to sports, which everyone wants, the question is that intramurals competes for the time using the field. Once they start with the interscholastic sports the soccer fields will be full because there is a boys' team and a girls' team practicing. The gym will be filled for most of the winter up to this time. They would have to do it during the off times in the year. He doesn't think they will be able to do both once they bring back middle school sports. At Bain, they have been able to do it, but at Western Hills it is not a neighborhood school, and all of the kids commute by bus. Therefore, it becomes difficult and expensive to do the intramural program at his school. That is why the interscholastic sports would be beneficial without having intramurals.

Mr. Stycos stated that he would strongly oppose eliminating the money for intramural sports. For kids who don't play the varsity sports, this gives them an opportunity to have some athletic exercise. He thought it was important to spread around the loss on the money. No matter where the money comes from, it is going to come away from somebody else.

He stated that he wished to offer as a friendly amendment that they could take the \$11,000 for the non-league games and one-half of the

intramurals which would be \$9,000. The total of \$20,000 could be put into the girls' hockey program as a middle ground.

Mr. Traficante seconded the motion.

This Amendment was adopted unanimously.

Mr. Lupino stated as a caution that the audience has to understand that the committee is making adjustments to a budget that they do not know if they are going to get this money. Don't anyone assume whatever gets done this evening will be what they will see in September. It has been agreed that the committee would like to do this, however, they may not all be happy campers after getting the information back from the City Council. The Athletic Director commented that if this be the case with the other non-league events he would need some clarification as to what can be done and what can't be done. The Thanksgiving Day football game is a non-league event, so is the Cranston East Cranston West City Cup hockey game, and a couple of other events. Mr. Lupino commented that the Cranston East game is a non-league event, but it is two Cranston teams.

Mr. Stycos stated that the memo he had indicated eliminating all non-league home and away athletic events with the exception of the Thanksgiving Day football game. The \$11,000 does not cover the football game. Mr. Lupino added that Dr. Cardoza will have

a conversation with Mr. Scherza and Mrs. Ciarlo. Mr. Stycos stated that the committee had voted on the amendment and not the actual item.

Mr. Stycos moved to amend that this \$11,000 savings does not include the Thanksgiving Day game.

Mr. Traficante seconded the motion.

This Amendment was adopted unanimously.

Mr. Lupino stated that the budget amount now is \$129,400,000 yet to go.

Mr. Palumbo stated that all he was hoping was that the committee didn't get to the point where they will tell the players who can wear the jersey, who can wear the socks. If this keeps up with cutting things out, it takes something away from the sport. Those warm-up games do mean something. Mr. Traficante, Athletic Director, stated that he has spent a lot of time presenting a zero based budget to the School Committee. That means that he went game by game, home by home, away by away; if they consider the \$1,500 for awards excessive, fine; but other than that, there is not one dime of excess

money. If the committee asks him to cut, he will cut; but they can't ask him to cut and expect programs. He did a lot of work and took much longer than Mr. Balducci cared for him to take. He didn't make numbers up. He tried to be as fair as possible. It is going to affect program just like when the committee cuts, it is going to affect the classroom.

This Amendment to fund a girls' co-op ice hockey team was adopted unanimously.

Mrs. Greifer stated that she was going to propose an amendment because in her belief neighborhood schools are the best model for the City of Cranston and for all education in general. As Mr. Lupino and others have noted, this budget is the one the committee will present to the Mayor. When the committee finally gets its budget back from the City Council, they will have to make many changes to it. She believes that the committee can trust its administration to make any cuts that are necessary, so, therefore, she is not in her proposed amendment not lobbying Peter to pay Paul. She is proposing to add to the bottom line the sum of monies that Mr. Balducci said were approximately \$742,000 that have been removed from the budget for Horton School, restore that money to keep Horton open. She asked Mr. Balducci to provide her with the exact number. Mr. Balducci indicated that the amount is \$742,831. Mrs. Greifer stated that this is the amount she proposed to add to the budget.

Mr. Archetto seconded the motion.

Mr. Traficante stated that all committee members should express themselves regarding the Horton issue. He indicated that this was by no means an easy decision because they met with administration on several occasions, Mr. Palumbo and himself, to discuss this proposal. Mr. Lupino added that Mr. Traficante was referring to the Budget Sub-committee. The way it was explained to them by administration and by the

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Superintendent was that this was an entire package to benefit the school department as a whole. By that, he was talking about the moving of kids to both Woodridge and Stadium not to jeopardize the fine education they were receiving at those schools, to utilize the Horton School building for a variety of pre-school programs, to utilize the Special Services Building for bringing back out-sourced children that costs thousands and thousands of dollars back into the City of Cranston. It was considered an entire package, not just the closing of Horton School to gain a building. He accepted that from the Superintendent, and tonight he was not going to be a hypocrite and lie to the people from Horton; he could not support this proposal.

Ms. Iannazzi stated that she wished to apologize to Mrs. Adler and to the Horton residents who were here on Monday night. She was asked

if the committee was going to be addressing the Save Horton amendment, and internal discussions among School Committee members had indicated that they weren't going to be discussing it until tonight. It did change at the last minute, and they did address the Save Horton amendment. They didn't take any action on it, and that may or may not occur tonight. She did want to apologize for the misunderstanding. Secondly, she agreed with Mr. Traficante; she couldn't support increasing the bottom line at this time. Two weeks ago she held a meeting at Woodridge School where she was joined by Assistant Superintendent Rick Scherza, principal Charlotte Josephs, and by the faculty and parents of the community. They see, unfortunately, the closing of Horton as a win-win for Woodridge and Horton parents. Woodridge is a very small and dedicated community, just like Horton is. She assured the parents that they will open their arms to them. They already have open houses planned if the closing of Horton goes through. It is really what is best for the students to be able to have finality at this point and fundamental fairness will allow the students to make the best adjustment now. She will support the closing of Horton at this time.

Mr. Palumbo stated that the subject of closing Horton School is emotional. Aside from that, the district has more than one Blue Ribbon School, so the children are getting a fine education in more than one school. The district has a Superintendent who has created a system that is the envy of many other cities. He remembers last year when he was fighting to find the money to keep Horton open because

he believed the small schools are the way to go. He believes the teacher aides in these schools where they need help is the way to go. Almost everything the parents are saying is true, but then it comes down to the finances. Every time we ask how we can pay for something, no one has the answer. The problems the committee is running into were not created by the City of Cranston; they are created by the federal government in not supplying the proper amount of money and the state as well. The committee still has to come up with the money. He asked the public to have faith in their Superintendent and in her staff. They have done an excellent job. As difficult as it is to have the school close, he was sure that the staff, starting with the Superintendent, will do everything they can to make sure that these students continue to receive the very best as far as their education goes.

Mr. Archetto stated that he was in support of Mrs. Greifer's amendment. The committee is sending the wrong message to the general public when they start closing small neighborhood schools and award winning schools that due an effective job with the

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children. It is definitely the wrong message. However, there is a bigger picture here. If the school administration is in the general direction of closing small neighborhood schools, ultimately it will hurt the Cranston taxpayer and the City of Cranston in the long run.

The property values are going to decrease. Secondly, people will put their houses up for sale. They will move because they won't want to live in a neighborhood where the neighborhood schools close. When they sell their house, they will get a value that is much less than what it was originally valued for. It is a lose-lose-lose situation, and the committee needs to find some answers.

Mr. Stycos stated that he was very torn on this amendment. People know that he supports keeping Horton open, but he sees this amendment as postponing some tough decision-making. He asked Mrs. Greifer if she had any suggestions on where money could be cut from the budget because everyone knows that the district will not get \$129.3 million nor will they get \$130 million either from the Mayor and the City Council. He is open to being convinced, and he would like to know why this isn't just postponing a difficult decision that they will have to make in June.

Mrs. Greifer stated that for the past few years the district has been under funded, and the administration has had to come up with ways to balance the budget that have been extraordinarily painful for the entire school department. She believed that they are the ones who have the expertise and have the educational knowledge of where the cuts will hurt the least. Certainly, they are educators, and she is not. She has to trust them and Mr. Balducci. She has to trust this staff that knows a great deal more than she about the impact of each and every cut that is made to the system. She has to trust them to come

up with those cuts. As much as she pours over this budget, every line item she sees in there, she can see some as being the first cuts made; but when one gets into the meat of the issues, she has to trust the people who know the best to make the recommendation to the committee as to where the cuts will hurt the least.

Mr. Stycos commented that he would agree that the administration is probably in the best position to suggest options and to make cuts, and as everyone knows on the School Committee, a lot of them have submitted questions in advance of these hearings to move them along during the hearings and received written answers. He had asked specifically what were the other options considered to save money rather than to close Horton, and he received a one sentence reply from the Superintendent which read, "Answer: We may have to look at closing other schools such as Rhodes." He asked the Superintendent to elaborate on that comment in light of Mrs. Greifer's amendment. In response, Mrs. Ciarlo said that the committee is asking for close to \$130 million, and they are not going to get that amount of money. As much as they don't like to close schools and as much as she would like to embrace small schools, she sees a school system that is beginning to disintegrate. It is not disintegrating with bricks and mortar; it is disintegrating when it doesn't have small class sizes with literacy assistance to help in those beginning years to learn how to read and how to write and how to do math. The administration has proposed to introduce a math program. They have had to do it over four or five years. She asked

what was the matter with them. Other school systems don't have to do this. As far as she is concerned, she has lived in Cranston for more than 40 years, and she considers it a disgrace that a city this wealthy and with this

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capacity is not able to afford a reasonably well-funded school system. The committee is nickling and diming over ice hockey for kids. The district is trying to keep them in school. "Do we not realize that the most precious thing we can do for those kids is to give them a good teacher, to give them reasonable class size, and all the support they need regardless of where it takes place." She said Rhodes because she was asked a question as if there is a magic formula to all of this. There is no way that administration could make \$10 million in cuts without shutting the doors. Before that time comes, there will be a lot of hurtful things; and she won't be able to recommend them; i.e., increasing bus lines. Now the committee will be worrying about the kids getting hurt on Park Avenue or some other place. There are not a lot of alternatives. She would rather have administration and the committee sit down with the City Council and tell the facts. The facts are that this is what it will cost to run the school system next year. Take the best shot at some places where they think the school department should cut that is going to make a significant difference in terms of millions of dollars. If they are not, nitpicking with a few cents here and there will not come close. It is

going to cloud the public thinking that a budget has been passed, and it is all set. The school district is nowhere near set, and it is moving backwards. She further commented that she feels badly in her last year as Superintendent to see a school system that she loves as much as this start to go backwards; it never did that before. There was always money for books; there was always money for literacy aides. That is why the district scores well because it provides good education and good professional development. With regard to teacher salaries, because the district has excellent teachers, the bricks and mortar do not teach the kids; it is those teachers every day. When there is a difficult class, it is important to have a teacher assistant in order to be able to do it. She told Mr. Stycos that the question he asked was premature in that it was so far out of line in terms of how far they have to go. She has been able to do some magic over the years to make some things work, but believe her that she can't come up with \$10 million, and there is no way that this school system can afford to. Last year the committee asked for \$121 million. If they had gotten that, the \$129 million may not seem so crazy this year. They were back to \$115 million, and after much ado and going through the ritual many times, the administration and committee realized that they needed this money. People want to hear what they want to hear, and as much as people talk to her about Horton, what about Horton School versus the Charter School, Horton School students will be embraced; they will be loved, and they will be well educated at both Stadium and at Woodridge Schools. With this school system, all of the resources for all of the kids have to be taken

into consideration, and she would not robbing Peter to pay Paul.

Mr. Stycos stated that with all due respect he felt he didn't get an answer to his question. The question was did Mrs. Ciarlo have a suggestion on how to save money in order to preserve Horton, as Mrs. Greifer said she does. He asked why Mrs. Ciarlo would suggest closing another elementary school as an option when that elementary school just so happens to be in his ward. Mrs. Ciarlo responded to Mr. Stycos that it was nothing personal. Administration looked at four schools, Rhodes, Waterman, Arlington, and Horton; so there was nothing personal there. She could not give specifics because it is an impossible task. If she saves Horton, she is still \$10 million down that she has to find. There is no way to find \$10 million. In reality it is a drop in the bucket compared to what they need to be able to fund. The reality says that

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they are not going to get \$10 million from the city. She would be delighted to be wrong on that one, but she didn't think it was going to happen. They don't know what they are getting from the state, and money in Washington is going to Iraq. They are cutting the federal aid to the districts. Until the funds come in, it is a ridiculous time of year to build a budget in the first place. Administration will go back to the tried and true areas, but even when they have done that in past years, they could get up to about \$2 million to \$2.5 million, and then

they were stuck. There was nowhere to go, and those were years when they had better financing. They could not go beyond a point without decimating the school system. The administration is thinking about it, and at this time she wasn't prepared to give the committee a list.

Mr. Lupino remarked that everyone knows how he feels about this situation. He has made himself clear in the media, and it was suggested to him from a Horton parent. Mr. Garabedian said two years' notice. Horton has been on the radar screen for much more than that. The rhetorical question is how many years can the district go being under funded by anywhere from \$5 million to \$7 million every year before it certainly catches up. It is beginning to catch up with Cranston Public Schools. Closing Horton School is not going to save the Cranston Public Schools. There is a lot of work to do. This Superintendent has done quite a bit in her tenure to bring the district back up to the glory. She had a good basis, and she has done a lot to bring it up; but the district can't keep getting cut \$5 million to \$7 million every year. It does catch up. As an example, the Athletic Director appeared before the committee tonight. He is the district's only athletic director. Over the line in Warwick, they have an athletic director at every high school. When the Superintendent says that this district does a lot more with less, she means it. This district is \$1,000 less than the per pupil expenditure in the State right now, but it gets results. He thought it would be nice to sell Cranston's program to Providence, as Mr. Eramian always said they should do. Today there

was talk about school uniforms. Eight years the School Committee talked about school uniforms, and it was instituted in Cranston. The ACLU said it had to be choice, and some schools did that. Providence thinks it is this fantastic idea eight years later. He doesn't like to compare this district, but this discussion this evening is going on throughout the state from Johnston to Westerly, to Woonsocket; they are all having to face the reality that No Child Left Behind is grossly under funded, that there is no state formula for funding education, that they are having rising utility costs and expenses. The Park View project that should have gotten done four years ago, the price doubled in four years. People talked about the new school in western Cranston and the cost over-runs; the bond referendum was approved in 1996 and built in 2002, and costs go up. He wouldn't apologize to the people of Horton. He promised, and he stated that it was a veiled promise, but there is one thing that happens; and if the committees should vote right now that the funding would not be there for Horton, the budget will go to the City Council and the Mayor and if the district should get anything close to the \$129 million, he promised as a prevailing member that he will ask to revote this and vote Horton back in. The likelihood of that happening is slim to none. What the people have to understand is the committee is looking for an appropriation over \$12 million more than they got last year. If they had gotten the appropriation last year, it would have been \$7 million over. He stated further that he has to support administration. They have the track record. Mrs. Ciarlo and her staff have the track record. The district has high performing

schools, and they are not transferring these children to under-performing schools. If it were a different situation, he may have been voting differently, but he will not vote to support this amendment at this time. As one of the parents said, don't torment them. If they have to close it, close it now. The staff won't stay because it is a precarious situation for them. As much loyalty they have in their hearts for children, they cannot stay if there may not be a position for them there. It will flip year after year after year.

Mr. Traficante commented that he hoped the people understood what he was saying. Regardless of what amendments the committee proposes tonight, whether they increase the bottom, decrease the bottom line, it is totally irrelevant. He has been through it so many years. Mr. Stycos is on target; the committee won't get \$129 million. The committee will come up approximately \$4 million to \$5 million short of that goal. That is when the committee's work will be set out for them. That is when they will make some very difficult decisions, and he wasn't looking forward to it.

Moved by Mrs. Greifer, seconded by Mr. Traficante and unanimously carried to move the question.

The amendment to increase the bottom line number of the budget by

\$742,831 to keep Horton School open was defeated with Mr. Archetto, Mrs. Greifer, and Mr. Stycos in favor; Ms. Iannazzi, Mr. Lupino, Mr. Palumbo, and Mr. Traficante were opposed.

Mr. Stycos stated that he had an amendment to accomplish the same goal, and it was slightly different from what he presented at Monday's meeting.

Moved by Mr. Stycos and seconded by Mr. Archetto to amend this Resolution as follows:

Save Horton Amendment

To replace \$48,883 for principal, secretary, custodian, and 3.5 teachers. Savings for three itinerant teachers would still be realized because keeping Horton open would add only 2 classrooms to the entire Cranston elementary system. Cost source: 2/9/06 presentation to school committee.

The listed cuts would be made.

\$323,992 would be added to the second item on line 191.

\$157,891 would be added to various benefits line items.

1. The Cranston School Department shall work with the NEL/CPS Construction Career Academy to stabilize enrollment at the charter school, avoid an increase in appropriation for the school in 2006-07 and thereby preserve the fine quality of Cranston schools. If

necessary, the school department will reduce or cease to cooperate with student recruitment efforts. (p. 157)

Budget savings \$314,977

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2. In keeping with Rhode Island general Laws 16-77-6 (d) the Cranston School Department will negotiate with NEL/CPS Construction Career Academy for its fair share of “all services centrally or otherwise provided by the school district.” The school department’s efforts shall include, but not be limited to, 1.4 percent reimbursement of the following expenses.

Human Resources Office

Salaries \$329,920

Benefits (50 percent) \$164,960

Health Consultant Services \$ 22,000

Employee Assistance Program \$ 12,505

Business Office and Grant Fiscal

Salaries \$529,319

Benefits (50 percent) \$264,659

Audit Services \$ 15,000

Banking fees \$ 2,000

MIS/Payroll

Salaries \$249,944

Benefits (50 percent) \$124,972

Technical Services \$ 10,000

Supplies \$ 16,000

Maintenance Fees \$ 23,000

Equipment \$ 22,000

Insurance/Legal

School Committee Error/Omission\$ 44,000

Labor Relations/Legal \$ 50,000

Workers Compensation \$470,677

Property Insurance (p. 194) \$272,066

Elem/Sec Insurance prop (p. 149) \$ 10,000

Special Ed Legal \$ 29,000

Superintendent

Salary \$130,955

Benefits (50 percent) \$ 65,478

Food Service Operating Loss \$ 57,501

Rubbish Removal (p. 149) \$ 91,612

Total \$3,007,568

Charter School Share (1.4%) \$ 42,106

Additional Revenue at least \$42,106

3. Establish a pilot program to save bussing costs by increasing RIPTA use to eliminate one bus and driver. This would expand the current program where Cranston students take RIPTA to the Met School. Savings are \$30,000 for the bus and driver, plus \$19,000 in driver benefits minus \$20,250 for 45 RIPTA passes for 45 high school

students for 10 months.

Budget Savings \$29,750

4. Cut \$100,000 for new busses to \$90,000 (p. 138) Note: By reducing bus fleet by one bus, we do not need to buy one new bus.

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5. Postpone central administration raises - \$21,522 (p. 190)

Budget Savings \$21,522

6. Avoid unemployment costs of closing Horton (26 weeks x \$462/wk X 2)

Budget Savings \$24,024

7. Close Special Services building, return it to the city asking that they give us the sale price. Move Special Services offices into vacant space in elementary school(s). Savings are utilities plus custodian (p189-190).

Budget Savings \$64,266

TOTAL SAVINGS \$506,645

Mr. Stycos stated that the other night when the committee discussed this proposal, one of the things that Mr. Traficante said was that he didn't like it because it pitted one group of students versus another.

He noted that in past budget hearings the committee had very few people testify and speak, and this time that has not been a problem. The consistent theme, in addition to Horton, it has been class size, whether it be class size at Waterman, class size at Orchard Farms, class size at Cranston West, or class size at Cranston East. He asked what this budget does to class size. What this budget does is eliminate Horton School and increases class size slightly in the elementary schools. It cuts ten teachers out of the high schools raising class size in the high schools, and it gives a 40% increase for the Charter School. That is not balanced, and his amendment seeks balance. It seeks to keep Horton School open, not with more money, but with the same money it has now; and it seeks to do the same thing with the Charter School. The Charter School problem is the financial problem. As Mr. Archetto said the other evening, no one is proposing closing the Charter School, but the committee can't have the Charter School expanding by hundreds of thousands of dollars without at least trying to do something about that when the district is suffering cuts in the high schools and elementary schools. The committee learned the other night from Mr. Traficante that the plan is not to increase enrollment just the \$300,00 for next year that is in the budget but at a student level of 160 students but to increase it to 245 students in the future which is another \$400,000 hole in the budget coming up in the future. The committee needs to look at the budget on the class size issue. They have heard from many schools, and he asked what the student to teacher ratio is at the Charter School; it is 12 to 1. It is twelve students to one teacher. What the committee is

seeing in the elementary schools are people coming and complaining that they have twenty-five, twenty-six, twenty-seven, and twenty-eight children in a class. The high school classes are going to be even bigger. Mr. Lupino interrupted and indicated to Mr. Stycos that he was talking apples and oranges. Mr. Stycos asked Mr. Lupino not to interrupt him.

Mr. Stycos went on to say that changes were made to No. 1 based on Mr. Traficante's comments. The point that Mr. Traficante made the other night was absolutely accurate which is that the committee cannot deny anyone the right to go to any charter school. If a student and family chooses to send a child to a charter school, they go. The committee has no right to deny them that. With the Construction Career Academy, the school department actively participates in the recruitment of students for the Charter

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School. They hand out materials for the Charter School. He received a letter from one parent who child was not allowed to go to the vocational school at West, and she received a letter saying they were urging the parent to consider the Charter School. The Charter School folks make presentations in the schools to the middle school students. The administration attends meetings discussing the enrollment at the Charter School.

No. 1 says is that the committee would talk with the Charter School and urge them to maintain an enrollment that was stable so that there would not be an increase in the appropriation in the coming school year. Only if necessary, the school department would reduce or cease to cooperate with their recruitment efforts putting them on the same plain as the other charter schools but not helping them take Cranston school students with a \$5,000 a head cost to the Charter School.

No. 2 has to do with the cost of the Charter School, and in part explains why the Charter School is able to have such a low student to teacher ratio. One of the reasons is that the school department pays the overhead for many many things at the Charter School so they don't have to pay for any human resources staff to manage employees. They don't pay for budgeting staff; they don't pay for payroll; they don't pay for insurance including worker's compensation insurance, liability insurance, property insurance. They don't pay for the benefit of having a superintendent. The school department's lunch program loses money; they don't pay a share of that. The second part is allocating a share to the Charter School of 1.4% which is their portion of the combined budgets of the two systems and calls for the school department to negotiate with the Career Academy about this. Mr. Stycos referred to the law he distributed to the committee and read: "All services provided by the school district shall be subject to negotiations between the Charter School and the school district and paid out of revenues of the Charter

School. Disputes will be adjudicated by the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education.” Mr. Stycos further commented that the district should start this negotiation process. When the Charter School started with only a freshmen class, there were some reasons for the school district to pay this cost to help them get going. Now they have four classes and a lot more money coming in; and it is a bigger operation, and they can start to pay for this. The second item would call for the administration to negotiate with the Charter School on these items and then hopefully achieve at least \$42,000 in savings which would come back to the committee for some kind of a ratification vote.

No. 3 is to establish a pilot program to save on busing costs using RIPTA. That would be eliminating one Cranston bus and one driver to start it and use RIPTA to take high school students to school. That is currently being done for Cranston students going to the Met School. The estimate of savings on this is close to \$30,000.

No. 4 - If the district saves a bus, they don't have to buy a bus so there is a \$10,000 reduction in the district's cost to purchase new/used buses.

No. 5 is postponing the central administration raises of \$21,000.

No. 6 is a \$24,000 conservative estimate of what the unemployment costs would be to close Horton School.

No. 7 is closing the Special Services building and turning it back over to the city asking them to give the school department the sale price on the building. He indicated that he only budgeted the savings of utilities and the custodian which combined is \$64,000 for a total savings of \$506,000 which is more than the savings needed to preserve Horton School.

Mr. Stycos stated that he hoped committee members would consider voting for it.

Mrs. Greifer asked if it were possible to deal with each of these sections of the amendment separately. If it could be done, she would move to do so.

Mrs. Greifer moved to amend this amendment to consider the Save Horton Amendment with each numbered section 1 through 7 each one individually.

Ms. Iannazzi seconded the motion.

Mr. Palumbo stated that he could understand wanting to break this amendment down, but he felt that if the committee members looked at

it carefully there are so many errors in it in terms of how it has been presented and what the facts are that it would take quite a while, and he didn't know if the committee would have the time tonight to go over this item by item. If the committee wants to do it, it's fine. He would find it very difficult to sit at this meeting and listen to someone tell the committee how they are going to save money, and in effect what Mr. Stycos is doing is cutting the legs out from under an outstanding program, a program that is so good that many cities in the United States have made inquiries in terms of trying to see if they can get something like this started. It equals Blue Ribbon Schools what is being done. Cutting the legs out of a program and saying that the district is paying for the guidance counselor and shouldn't be doing that is just another way of trying to destroy a very very good program. Those kids who are in that Charter School were somewhat lost, and it is funny that a person who has never walked through that school, to his knowledge, has never sat at any one of the awards ceremonies or anything else, can sit here and say that it is going to cost money when, in fact, the district pays one-half of what it is paying for the other students. This is wrong. It is doing what the committee was talking about in sports. Mr. Stycos is trying to take away from one program to put it in another, and he didn't think that these facts were right. He didn't have the time to go through everything here with Mr. Balducci, but he knew that most of the things Mr. Stycos was talking about, and some are fair and accurate, but many of them are not accurate. These are things that should be done and are done in order to run a program correctly. When Mr.

Stycos talks about class size, he asked how he could talk about class size when a student is learning about a backhoe and there would be twenty-nine students in the class. One has to look at the entire program, and he thought it was a shame that this would even be brought up.

Mr. Archetto stated that he didn't think the motion should be divided; it should be voted on up and down. Secondly, he felt that Mr. Traficante had a good point when he said

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that one school is being pitted against another. He has done some research, and the Charter School is doing a lot of great things in this city. It has been nationally awarded through national competitions. That is why over the last couple of nights he has come up with a compromised amendment that he will be offering to save Horton. He doesn't want to pit one school against another so he has another amendment that he hoped the committee would be supporting.

Mr. Lupino indicated that Mrs. Greifer's amendment was to divide Mr. Stycos's amendment. If a member voted yes they would be voting to divide it into seven parts. If a member voted no they would be voting to take it as one compete amendment.

This amendment was defeated with Mrs. Greifer and Ms. Iannazzi in

favor; Mr. Archetto, Mr. Lupino, Mr. Palumbo, and Mr. Stycos were opposed; Mr. Traficante abstained.

Mr. Lupino called for a five-minute recess at 9:12 p.m.

Mr. Lupino reconvened the meeting at 9:20 p.m.

Ms. Iannazzi stated that this amendment was not proper before the committee. On legal and substantive grounds, she would like to vote against this amendment. However, as everyone knows her father serves as Business Manager for Local 1033. He is elected directly by the membership and not appointed by the New England Laborers or any affiliated entity. His compensation derives from membership dues, and he receives no compensation from the New England Laborers. Neither she nor any member of her family receives any direct or indirect benefit from the Construction Academy. No member of her family attends or plans to attend the Charter School. Most important is the fact that the Charter School affords a unique educational opportunity to the community and to the student body. This vocational education, as well as the financial commitment of the New England Laborers, is the envy of other school districts. An increased enrollment gives the students a greater opportunity and increases the Laborers' costs. It certainly doesn't reduce their costs. However, she is aware of the political climate, and thus it is necessary to proceed with caution. This morning she faxed a request for an advisory opinion to the Rhode Island Ethics Commission. As

she awaits their response, she felt the most appropriate action is to abstain from voting on this amendment tonight. She apologized to the residents of Ward 6 whose voice will not be heard at this time.

Mrs. Greifer commented that she realized that Mr. Stycos has worked long and hard on this amendment. She has expressed her concerns about No. 3, eliminating a bus run to LaSalle and replacing it by the use of RIPTA services. Because LaSalle has students who are in grades 7 to 12, she was very uncomfortable putting 12 and 13 year olds on public buses that would go into Kennedy Plaza and then transfer to another bus to get them to LaSalle. For sixteen or seventeen year olds she would not have a problem with it, but the younger students, when they go on a Cranston bus, are under the care of Cranston employees. If anything goes wrong there is someone there with a radio to help them. She has a great fear that something could happen when they get to

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Kennedy Plaza and the transferring there, who would watch out for these kids. That is her biggest reservation to this amendment.

Mr. Archetto stated that people have to realize that the committee doesn't have the answer yet with regard to the numbers. They have asked a lot of questions and have brought up the topic of the Charter School, but they really don't know the fiscal numbers on each side

meaning what does the Laborers infuse in the City of Cranston as far as the amount of money that comes in. Until he knows those answers, he is very hesitate with this amendment. That is why he has drafted another amendment that he hoped his colleagues would support because he thought it was a good idea.

Mr. Lupino asked Mr. Archetto if it was his intent to withdraw his second, and Mr. Archetto responded no because it should be heard. He will make his decision when it comes time to vote as to what he should do.

Mr. Traficante said that he would have to abstain on this amendment because he is an employee of the New England Laborers Labor and Management Corporation Trust and secondly he is the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the New England Laborers' Cranston Public Schools' Construction Career Academy. He indicated to Mr. Stycos that he had made a comment in the very beginning about the Charter School. This school is not the same as any other charter school. They are Cranston Public Schools. They are not just any charter school. They are in partnership with the Cranston Public Schools. They are the third high school in the City of Cranston. They are not some separate entity like the Cranston Vocational School which is a state school even though the district appropriates and subsidizes that school by some \$600,000 per year. Secondly, which basically nullifies what is going on, and he was sorry that the parents from Horton left because they would have heard his whole dissertation.

Mr. Traficante went on to say that he has to abstain from voting but he wished to express his feelings. He told the Horton parents that what is being proposed tonight, unfortunately, is blatantly illegal. The charter was approved by this very School Committee four years ago. It was also approved by the Board of Regents. The charter for the Charter School, as approved by the Board of Regents and this School Committee, sets parameters and those parameters are all spelled out in that charter in terms of goals, admissions, enrollment, policy, etc. The enrollment parameter in that charter states that the population at the Charter School can increase up to 240 kids. Will they ever reach that goal, he had no idea because he had no idea of what kids might be interested in over the next four or five years. That is the maximum that they can enroll in that school. They probably won't reach that goal because the capacity of the school will probably limit them to maybe 160 or 170 kids which is fine because that creates a very good pupil teacher ratio. Kids retain it better, they listen better, and learn faster. They are not disappointed with that. The kids, by state law again, at the Charter School have all the same rights and the same privileges as any non-chartered school which means they are public school students. Here the committee is tonight proposing that prospective students be denied an educational experience. Give notice to the fact that prospective students who want to go into the advanced placement program were not being capped. They were not capping those who want to go into the Enrichment

Program. They are not capping kids who want to go into the Vocational Program to get that experience. They are not capping kids who want to go to the AEP Program. They are not capping any other program other than the Cranston Public Charter School. He asked why this is. He hoped it was for the right reasons, but it seemed underhanded to him. There is a special school there. They are providing a service to those kids in his opinion who have been disserved by this school department and every school department in the State of Rhode Island, and those are the kids that cannot survive in a traditional in chalk, talk, and test setting. This is a hands-on, job simulated, career oriented, project based curriculum. The kids thrive there, kids, who by the way are at risk and have survived and also become honor students. For the first time in their life, they have some self-esteem, some self-confidence, and the committee is going to deny prospective kids from that experience. That is a sad situation for this School Committee and for this amendment. He stated further that he would not support it verbally; he cannot vote. A very dim picture is being painted of what the Laborers do at this Charter School. The New England Laborers not only get in-kind services from the Cranston Public Schools, the New England Laborers give services back. The Charter School has a budget of roughly \$1.5 to \$1.6 million. One-third of that money comes from the State of Rhode Island, not the City of Cranston. It comes from the State of Rhode Island by state law. The other one-third

comes from the City of Cranston. That is by state law also. The money follows the kid. He is a public school student, therefore, that \$10,000 or \$11,000 follows that kid. The money also follows some of the kids who go to Bishop Hendricken, LaSalle, and to every other parochial school. This school department sponsors their transportation, their books, and if there is a resource student, the resource help; but no one complains about that. These kids deserve the same exact recognition and the same exact educational experience as any public school student because they are public school students. The Laborers give their fair share; they pay for approximately \$400,000 of technical experience in terms of staff members. He consulted with the New England Laborers' attorney, the counsel for the School Committee, and they told him that he could certainly voice his opinion even though he cannot vote. The people of Cranston are going to know the truth about the Charter School because they are being distorted tonight, and he was sick of it, and he would not tolerate it. Mr. Traficante further commented that it would be nice if everyone from the School Committee came to the Charter School and saw the experience that is occurring there and talk to the kids.

Mr. Traficante went on to say that this School Committee has no authority or legal authority to cap this particular program, therefore, this amendment is illegal and improper before this board.

Mr. Lupino stated to the committee that whether or not they support

Mr. Stycos he cautioned them because he also believed this was illegal. Because the committee was going to vote on this as one complete situation, they may open themselves to some legal action. What he found inherently wrong with this is the committee should not be doing this this evening. This evening the committee should be coming to a bottom line figure to present to the Mayor, but what Mr. Stycos is trying to do with this is what the committee will be doing in May, June, July, and probably the next six months after that in trying to find places to cut. This is not the time to do this. He indicated to Mr. Stycos

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that he stopped at No. E which read: “Charter public schools shall be eligible to receive other aids, grants, Medicaid revenue, and other revenue according to Rhode Island law as though it were a school district.” He further commented that this committee has no control over another school district. He can’t tell Johnston what to spend. He can bill Johnston for kids who go to the Career and Technical Center, but he cannot tell them what to do. This is another school district, so he found that inherently a problem. Under 16-77-8, it states: “Charter school approval or for establishment or continuation shall be for a five-year period.” This was negotiated already. What Mr. Stycos is trying to do in essence is break a contract that was already been negotiated with the Laborers. If Mr. Stycos could find what the Charter School and the Laborers contribute, it will far

outweigh what this school department would be liable for if they should pull that funding and agree to certain things and the school department would have to pay some of their expenses on their side. This school department would be spending more money.

Mr. Stycos publicly recognized that there are people in his ward who send their children to the Charter School and are very happy with the services that they get. They are very pleased. They have made to him some of the very comments that Mr. Traficante just stated. A good question is are we getting as much as we are giving. That is why this amendment was re-written. The first round said that the school would be billed a certain amount of money. This amendment states that the committee will seek at least this amount of money in negotiations. The result of negotiations may very well be the administration coming back to the committee indicating that they get all these things from the Charter School, here's the list, and here's what they are given. Therefore, administration would recommend the following arrangement. It could be the same arrangement or a different arrangement. However, the process should be started so they know what the facts are. It is his opinion that this is the way the scale would go, but it talks about negotiations. This whole issue of whether or not it is a public school is a gray or middle area. It is not really a public school because the committee does not control it, and he would agree with Mr. Traficante that it is not completely a private charter school because it is a partnership with the school department. There is nothing in his amendment that talks about

denying anyone the right to go there. The school department does not have a contract; there is nothing written, and Mr. Piccirilli said it the other evening, and contracts get re-negotiated. When situations change, the contracts are re-negotiated.

Mr. Palumbo moved to move the question.

Ms. Iannazzi seconded the motion.

Mr. Palumbo and Ms. Iannazzi withdrew their motions.

This Amendment was defeated with Mr. Stycos in favor; Mrs. Greifer, Mr. Lupino, and Mr. Palumbo opposed; Mr. Archetto, Ms. Iannazzi, and Mr. Traficante abstained.

Mr. Balducci stated that the bottom line for the budget is \$129,422,156.

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Mr. Archetto moved to amend the budget as follows:

The Cranston School Committee close the Special Services Center on Sprague Avenue. This would result in a cost savings between \$50,000 and \$65,000. The building should be appraised by the school

department, then transferred to the Cranston City Council by the School Committee for such purpose as to have the City Council put the building up for sale. Once the building is sold by the City Council, the proceeds from the revenue of sold building will be turned over to the School Committee in order to keep Horton functioning as an elementary school. Also, all programs and classes being held at the Special Services Center will be redeployed to other vacant classrooms throughout the school department's various locations. All vacant classrooms subject to the approval of the majority of the School Committee.

Mr. Stycos seconded the amendment.

Mr. Piccrilli pointed out that he believed Mr. Archetto was seeking the abandonment of a building, and there is a process they must go through by statute. This is not the appropriate forum for that.

Mrs. Ciarlo commented that the Special Services Center houses all of the confidential records of the students with special needs. They also use it for gathering information in order to apply for Medicaid reimbursement. If they were not to close Horton School, and even if they were, the district needs a place to put that staff and to have it in one location; and they don't have it. It would not be feasible for them to close that building as it is unless they were doing something with Horton Elementary School. What they will end up with is no place for these people to keep their records. That brings in close to \$1 million

between the services and they have been doing it for eight or nine years. They have to have the records available and in a secure place. They do have plans to use that building should they close it, but certainly not to abandon it for the purpose of selling it.

Mr. Lupino asked Mr. Stycos if he wished to withdraw his second on advice of counsel. Mr. Stycos stated that he has been on the School Committee for five years, and there have been four times that Mr. Piccirilli has pronounced resolutions illegal; and he is just finding it a little tiresome. It would be better if he suggested how to make them legal rather than do that. He wished to hear why it is illegal or if there was something wrong in the legal process, it should be corrected. There was an amendment the point of which is to abandon a building, turn it over to the City Council and get the money to keep a school open. Mr. Lupino stated that very early on in this situation when the committee first found out about Horton School, they were informed at that time that they need to have a formal hearing to change the status of a building. This is not the forum for that. Mr. Piccirilli stated that his simple point was statute 16-2-15. He commented further that no one told him that this amendment was going to be made tonight. When he hears something like this, it triggers something in his mind, and what it triggers in his mind is 16-2-5 which talks about a School Committee shall not abandon a schoolhouse without good and just cause. He was not talking about closing a school. The committee may be closing the Horton School, but they will still be using it

for school purposes. What Mr. Archetto's amendment seemed to suggest was that the committee would close a school facility; there are no traditional type classrooms in Special Services Building. If the committee were to close that building and abandon it to the city for sale, there is a process they would have to follow. They would have to have public hearings on it, and The Commissioner of Education has been very clear about that. That may be something that Mr. Archetto could bring up at the next School Committee meeting. As the Chairman has mentioned, this is a preliminary wish list of a budget. By some time in May, the committee will know what their real number is, and at that time, if they want to have hearings on closing and selling the Special Services Center, it can certainly be addressed at some later School Committee meeting before the final budget is passed. He told Mr. Stycos that this is the way to address that legal problem. If someone wanted to show him these amendments before they proposed them other than having them come up at the last minute, then maybe he would have had a more thorough answer beforehand. He cautioned the committee that they can go ahead and pass this amendment in their budget. In May, when the committee really has to pass a budget, they will have to re-address it.

Mr. Stycos offered a friendly amendment to add a sentence as follows: Should any portion of the amendment violate State law, State law shall govern.

Mr. Archetto asked Mrs. Ciarlo if the district had ample space in the various facilities throughout the city to use some of these areas for storage services to remove the records from Special Services and transfer them to other locations in various departments. In response, Mrs. Ciarlo stated that these records are used on a regular basis because there are certain times during the year when the staff has to take an accounting of the services being provided. It is not like they can package them up and put them away and keep them in various places. The team needs to have those records available so they can use them at a given time. She recommended that if they close the Special Services Center as a Special Services Center, they have to have a place to keep the files together to be able to provide the services that they do. It cannot be far flung. That money is too priceless to the district coming in under Medicaid reimbursement to be able to say at this point in time that they have other spaces to use. She would not recommend it. She would recommend at some point in time when it all settles down that if they go through with the plan as proposed, then that could be used as a way of getting revenue rather than selling it off. They can use that facility because of its location and because it is ground level to bring back some of the high tuition students that the district now has anywhere from \$60,000 plus for tuition per year. That would be a savings which would enable the district to do some other good things for the kids in Cranston. Mrs. Ciarlo further commented that her answer was no to Mr. Archetto's question.

Mr. Stycos stated that he couldn't understand how the answer to that would be no given the fact that last year the committee closed thirteen elementary classrooms and Orchard Farms School has and will have for the foreseeable future many open rooms. He knows that in the past when they have had problems they move around special education programs from one building to another; they have combined music and art rooms; and they have made do. A few years ago, they had thirteen more rooms full of kids than they do this year. He felt that this could be done by working at it and moving

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things around. He told the Superintendent that she has been very resourceful in the past, and he was sure that she would disappoint the committee.

Mrs. Greifer asked if anyone had any information or had done any research on the value of that property. She would like some idea as to the amount of money for a building of that size. She asked if the city has the decision whether or not to give the money from the sale of that building to the schools. Mr. Lupino responded that the school department has a leasehold on any school building. As long as a building is used for educational purposes, the committee has the care and control of it. If it isn't being used for educational purposes, it reverts to the city because it is city property. Mr. Greifer said that the city can decide whether or not to sell it, whether to use it for some

other city purpose, and if they did sell it whether or not they would give the school department the money. Mr. Lupino used as an example that years ago the school department leased out the Ponagansett School on Pontiac Avenue. He asked where the lease money went to, and Mr. Traficante responded that it stayed with the city. He added that when he was the Mayor of the City they abandoned three schools. One was the school in Thornton which they sold to CCAP. They also sold the Doric Avenue School to the CCAP, and the Meshanticut School for condominiums. It is up to the City Council as far as direction goes.

This Amendment was defeated with Mr. Archetto and Mr. Stycos in favor; Mrs. Greifer, Ms. Iannazzi, Mr. Lupino, Mr. Palumbo, and Mr. Traficante were opposed.

Mr. Stycos moved to amend this Resolution as follows. He indicated that it had to do with outside rentals. When someone rents a gym or a school facility, the money is kept in a separate account. This amendment would make that money part of the regular budget. It would add a line item to the revenue page "outside rentals" at \$80,000. He came up with \$80,000 which is about the average for the past two years based on the information that Mr. Balducci supplied. He budgeted expenses at \$70,000 which is a little bit more than the average has been in the last two years for the salary, and the final provision is that this would give \$10,000 and that they would add \$5,000 to the music program at East and \$5,000 to the music program

at West.

Mr. Archetto seconded the motion.

Mr. Traficante asked where the money goes at the present time if they rent out a gym or an auditorium. In response, Mr. Balducci said that he places those revenues in a reimbursable fund. It is a fund outside the main operating budget. It is supposed to be a break-even situation outside the main operating budget. In some cases, they do make some money, and they purchase necessary supplies and materials for the buildings. Mr. Traficante asked Mr. Stycos if he was appropriating approximately \$70,000 for the coverage by custodians, etc., and Mr. Stycos referred to a memo which stated that two years ago it was \$61,000 for the expenses of salaries; and last year it was \$73,000, but the revenue was \$97,000 last year. The ratio is right.

Mr. Lupino asked Mr. Zisseron if the school department rents to non-profits as well as for-profit organizations. In response, Mr. Zisseron said that there is a School

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Committee policy for building rentals, and he believed it states that it is for community groups and not for-profit companies. Mr. Lupino commented that the school department rents only to non-profit organizations, and Mr. Zisseron responded that he was correct. He also indicated that many of the PTO's have dance recitals and

after-school dances by private dance studios. On the rental, it is a PTO sponsoring a recital by that teacher, but it is really PTO associated and not a private dance school. Mr. Lupino asked if the numbers Mr. Stycos presented were correct, and Mr. Zisseron said that Mr. Balducci had the numbers. He thought they sounded reasonable. He tries very hard not to rent to out of city groups. He doesn't like strangers in the buildings because in the past they have had vandalism. The only outside organizations that he would rent to are Boy Scouts when they have leadership meetings at Park View, the American Cancer Society and other organizations like that. Locally, he would rent to the private sports groups for Cranston kids. He won't rent to AAU mainly because it is not all Cranston kids, and he didn't think this was the business they should be in unless he is directed differently.

Mr. Lupino commented to Mr. Stycos that he had stated that a \$5,000 line item should be added for music programs at Cranston East and \$5,000 at Cranston West. He asked what areas would receive this money and if it would be at the discretion of the music coordinator, and Mr. Stycos said that it would be at his discretion. He further commented that they may do one thing at East and something different at West, but they would have the same money.

Mrs. Ciarlo suggested that in the budget there is money to refurbish musical instruments that they had put in, so before they necessarily say just for music, she would like to consider art and some other

areas just like they did the library.

Mr. Lupino stated that this amendment would not change the budgeted amount.

Mr. Stycos explained that it would increase the expenses and the revenues by the same amount, \$80,000. It is a wash.

This Amendment was adopted unanimously.

Mr. Traficante referred to page 142 of the budget where the asset protection amount is \$158,150. In that category, \$18,000 is earmarked for Western Hills Middle School. The \$18,000 is broken down into two parts, replacing rugs in the administrative office and painting of the gym which does not include the floor but the gym itself.

Mr. Traficante moved to leave the rug there because it is in horrendous condition. It is intended to put tile there, and in lieu of the gym painting, utilize the \$10,000 to start replacement of lockers at Western Hills Middle School because he understands that they are in horrendous condition. Based on Mr. Zisseron's figures, the double lockers cost approximately \$70 to \$80 per locker, and they would be able to get 125 lockers at the school to start that process each and every year. He noted that this does not change any line items. He is re-appropriating the money not toward the gym being painted but toward the locker replacement. This has been the discussion of their Parent Advisory Board as well. Mr. Nero indicated that he had

discussions last year with Mrs. Ciarlo and Mr. Scherza and Mr. Zisseron. If they go about it this way, it will take four years to replace all the lockers in the building; but it will be a start. The rug will be fine

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and the gym will be fine, but this is a start to replace the lockers. This was included in his capital improvements. He has had the same capital improvements every year for the last seven years. The gym comes up for painting, window replacements, the rug, and the gym lockers.

Ms. Iannazzi seconded the motion.

This Amendment was adopted unanimously.

Mr. Archetto moved to delete the line item for administrative salary pay increases of \$21,552 cited on page 190 of the 2006-2007 Cranston School Budget. The committee will appropriate the \$21,552 to the Cranston East music and band departments and the Cranston East art department. Also, to be equitably apportioned to the Cranston West music department and band department and the Cranston West art department.

Mr. Stycos seconded the motion.

Mr. Traficante believed Mr. Archetto is speaking about the personnel director, the finance director, and Mr. Laliberte. The committee and administration were in negotiations approximately 80 sessions that lasted two to six hours. They have been in that building at night discussing not only budgetary situations but also special needs situations. Mr. Balducci has been at every single meeting regarding negotiations, and he comes to a variety of other meetings any time money is involved. These are three people who go above and beyond the call of duty. No matter the time of day, they are there. They would work seven days a week if necessary. They have been there weekends as well. To give everyone a raise in the Cranston School Department, which they have done thus far, and to deny the three people who put in the most hours, doesn't seem proper so he could not support this amendment.

Mr. Stycos stated that he would be supporting this amendment. He felt that people who make \$100,000 a year are in a better position to take a freeze than the rest of the people. That is a lot of money, and they will be fine. There are a lot of other things that are more important. He felt that the committee has given very generous raises in the past to these positions. One of them received a \$6,000 raise last year, a second received a \$2,000 per year raise, and the third about a \$4,000 raise. They got nice raises last year, and the committee has to make some tough decisions; and those who make \$100,000 ought to be able to take a pay freeze for a year.

Mr. Palumbo stated that he obviously wasn't going along with this amendment at all. It comes down to the fact that if a person doesn't have a contract, the committee will make you pay for that because the committee doesn't have a contract with these people. The fact that they work hard and do their job where many other systems require two or three people doesn't mean anything. This is not the first time he has heard this. He felt that one had to sit back and measure what the person is being paid by what that particular position is paid in other cities. If one were to examine it, they are

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not overpaid at all. But some of the members sitting at this table will constantly try to take the money from them because they feel they are overpaid. He sees how hard they work. Mr. Traficante is not the only one who sees them. If a member asks a question and they have to work beyond the hours to get the answer, they do it. He asked Mr. Stycos what he wants, and then he wants to turn around and punish them. He is punishing them by taking this away. He asked if it is because some people don't make that money. He doesn't know why people want to do this. He doesn't believe that \$21,000 is being badly spent on this particular item. In fact, he felt it was being very well spent. Mr. Palumbo stated that he would be definitely against this

amendment. Mr. Traficante corrected his earlier statement that there were three positions; it is four positions. He also commented that he was going back to the mid 80's early 90's when there were other superintendents in charge at that time. He was always critical of it and so was the City Council that the administration in the Briggs Building was very very excessive. Catherine Ciarlo has operated, in comparison to what they had back then, with a skeleton staff perhaps three times less than what they had back then, and he was not exaggerating. So, based on the number of people who are performing those duties at the central administrative level, they are probably not paid for what they do and the hours they put in as well as other school systems. They do their jobs, and they do it extremely well.

This Amendment was defeated with Mr. Archetto and Mr. Stycos in favor; Mrs. Greifer, Ms. Iannazzi, Mr. Lupino, Mr. Palumbo, and Mr. Traficante opposed.

Mr. Stycos moved to amend this Resolution. He stated that this is a simple proposal. The budget proposes expanding the math coaches from 1.5 full-time equivalents to 4. This proposal proposes going from 1.5 to 2 and taking the two other positions and re-assigning them to the high schools where they have class size problems due to the elimination of study halls.

Mr. Archetto seconded the motion.

Mrs. Ciarlo asked the committee to realize that administration is trying to implement a revised math program. In order to do that, the district needs these math coach positions. Last year they introduced 1.5 positions, and the committee asked for more. This year in the budget there were two positions so that would bring them up to 3.5 positions. They were not only going to work at the elementary level but also they were going to move on to middle school which is so important. The math scores are not as good as the literacy scores; and they need to do something about this. No one is saying that there is crowding at the high school level yet. When they looked at all of the positions and the space available, they are in good shape and are able to do that without adding staff at either East or West. The Mayor is not the only one who has a period of amnesty on positions. They can do that, but she is not recommending that the committee eliminate the math coach positions. They work with kids and teachers to help implement the program.

Mr. Lupino commented that he had to agree with administration. The success is there, and if they didn't have success, he might be disagreeing with Mrs. Ciarlo. The district

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does have success, and she sees this as an area where the district needs to be more successful. He added that he would not support

this amendment.

Ms. Iannazzi stated that she would also be supporting administration. She has seen first hand what an amazing job the math coaches do, particularly at the elementary level. They actually work above and beyond with meetings at night to try to explain the math program to the parents. She hoped that this amazing work will continue and expand.

Mr. Archetto stated that he didn't think anyone likes to cut or reduce math coaches, but he thought he understood the intent of this amendment. It is to reduce the math coaches by two, and, therefore, increase two other positions preferably at the high school where they are losing five. If they increase two at the high school, they would reduce class size somewhat by two additional teachers. It is a difficult decision to make, but he is in favor of reducing class size.

This Amendment was defeated with Mr. Archetto and Mr. Stycos in favor; Ms. Iannazzi, Mrs. Greifer, Mr. Lupino, Mr. Palumbo, and Mr. Traficante opposed.

Mr. Stycos moved to amend this Resolution as follows:

The School Committee directs the administration to draft a plan to establish at least four traditional sixth grade classes in elementary schools citywide starting in September 2006. The traditional sixth

grade classes need not have the same curriculum as the sixth grade in middle schools. The plan will shift at least 100 sixth graders from middle schools to elementary schools. Under the plan, all sixth graders will attend middle school unless their parents choose for them to attend a traditional sixth grade. The plan shall include a cost estimate and shall be presented to the School Committee for consideration by April 15.

Mr. Stycos added that this is asking administration to come up with a plan, and then the committee would decide if they like the plan or not.

He further commented that there were three reasons for doing this. First of all, it gives parents an option to go with the 6th grade. Some children are different, and some would be better off being in a 6th grade, and their parents feel that way. The district should consider giving them that option. The district is having crowding in the middle schools, and there is space in the elementary schools. If they could move some of the kids out of the middle schools back into the elementary schools and the parents want that to happen, it would be a winning way to address the problem. He couldn't remember his third reason for wanting to accomplish this.

Mr. Traficante seconded the motion.

Mrs. Ciarlo stated that she wouldn't want to be the kid that the parents say everyone else is moving on to middle school, but tells their child he or she needs another year to get ready and keeps the

child in 6th grade. People are worrying about middle school interscholastic sports, and a student couldn't participate in middle school sports if he or

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she is in elementary school. The age range for those 6th graders is more appropriate at 6th to 8th grade rather than to have K to 6th. Some places in the country are re-thinking their whole idea of K-8 schools that were called grammar schools in the past. They had elementary but also had the 7th and 8th grades so there was a different section for 7th and 8th graders at that particular point in time. It is more appropriate and the curriculum is richer for them in a middle school. They have five periods a week of math, five periods a week of social studies, science, language arts, and all the others. She is an elementary teacher so she knows exactly what they have done and what they do. To be a master of all those subjects to the extent that the teachers are in the middle school is almost an impossibility. There are some outstanding teachers who are able to bridge that gap, but it is few and far between because it is just too much. People may think it is a good idea, but when the students come crying home that they don't want to be there and cry that they want to go on, she can just see the chaos that will arise, and it is not for a good benefit. She asked what they would say when these students finish grade 8; they are not ready for grade 9 so they will be kept in the middle school for another year until they are ready. They

won't be able to graduate, and they will be cuddled until they graduate. At some point in time, a decision has to be made. This is one that is certainly not educationally sound.

This amendment failed with Mr. Archetto and Mr. Stycos in favor. Mrs. Greifer, Ms. Iannazzi, Mr. Lupino, Mr. Palumbo, and Mr. Traficante were opposed.

Mr. Stycos moved to amend this Resolution as follows:

The School Committee directs the administration to request proposals as soon as possible for an energy conservation program that emphasizes education and behavior changes, not capital investment. The energy conservation program will be implemented by July 1, 2006 at the latest.

Mr. Archetto seconded the motion.

Mr. Stycos commented that everyone knows this is a way of saving money. The district is having difficulty getting off the mark in getting this started. This is an attempt to make this happen. The committee has had a lot of discussions about capital versus behavior. He was convinced that the district should go with a plan that included capital until he went to a workshop that was held for municipal officials at Save the Bay. At that workshop, he talked with Bob Cerrio who was the person who used to work for one of the behavior programs, EEI,

but now works for Hudson Oil. He said to go with the behavior and education program first to get the numbers solid. If the district doesn't do that, then they will open themselves up to getting hurt with a capital program because they wouldn't have solid numbers when working a deal paying for equipment and the savings are helping to pay for the equipment. Get the numbers solid first, and at a certain point the district would cap the amount of savings they can get, and at the time they should go to equipment. He went to another workshop where a person from Narragansett Electric said essentially the same thing; go for the easy savings first that won't cost any money. That is why he is suggesting this amendment.

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Mrs. Ciarlo commented that it is a good idea to finally make a decision on this. The committee and administration have been talking about it, and it seems to have gotten so far and not beyond that point. Mrs. Ciarlo stated that she supports this amendment.

Mr. Lupino stated that he was pushing for this a couple of years ago. He spoke at length with Mr. Cerrio, and he told him all these good things. The committee ran into a snag when they started to bring in the different companies. It is very important to understand that if the committee goes ahead with this that, whether it is Mr. Piccirilli or someone else with legal expertise, someone should write the RFP for

this and not get into the situation they were in last time. The committee sent out an RFP; they had a response and had a very good situation. He hoped that this would not take away from the other plan that is going on with the city program where they are looking at doing some capital improvements jointly with them. Mr. Lupino commended Mr. Stycos for this amendment.

Mrs. Greifer commented that she and Mr. Balducci recently attended a meeting of the Rhode Island Association of School Committees. They discovered that the electric supplier to whom the district is paying only 5.8 cents per kilowatt hour for electricity and the going rate is 10 cents, and the district is locked into 12.7 cents, also offers a conservation program where they will come in and do an audit and minor equipment items such as lights, timers, etc. That can be an added addition to this to help out the district.

Mr. Lupino added that the other companies were guaranteeing savings to the district. Their suggestion was to get an energy manager who would be paid from the energy savings. There is some initial expenditure. He asked Mr. Stycos how he planned to get this seed money. Mr. Traficante responded that the RFP would determine this. Whoever bids would indicate that.

This Amendment was adopted unanimously.

Mr. Stycos moved to amend this Resolution as follows:

To put money aside to address class size issues at the high schools. He noted that the committee doesn't know what the impact of this compacting is going to be. He would like to set some money aside to partially reverse the budget strategy of eliminating ten positions in the high schools. That is what these items are for. He further commented that he would present it as one package for these items to take those line items. Mr. Stycos had removed item No. 1 from the amendment.

They are as follows:

2. Establishment of a student parking fee program at both high schools. Students shall be charged \$30 pr month for parking.
120 spaces X \$30/month x 10 months Additional Revenue \$36,000

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Mr. Stycos noted that in addition to the revenue it would show the City Council that the committee is serious about this budget and are willing to establish a parking fee that no one will be enthusiastic about but it is one place where the committee can raise some revenue.

3. Closing schools a second week at Christmas saving about 1/3 of estimated utility costs.

Additional Revenue \$13,000

Mr. Stycos noted that based on the information Mr. Balducci supplied on utility costs, he took 1/3 of the usual cost, and that is \$13,000. He thought that might be in the ballpark of what they might save by shutting down. Whether or not the district saves 1/3, he doesn't really know.

4. Transferring \$350,000 from the elementary textbook replacement account (p. 152)

Additional Funds \$350,000

Mr. Stycos noted that this is the new reading series that the Superintendent has chosen for the elementary schools. He added that the district would like to have new books, but he thought the high school class size issue was more important.

5. Appropriating the 2004-2005 surplus (per audit report)

Additional Revenue \$81,479

6. Eliminating summer help and asking the city to replace them (p. 149)

Mr. Stycos noted that this is the summer help the school department

hires for building and grounds. The committee could ask the city to replace this through their summer youth program.

Additional Revenue \$28,000

Mr. Stycos commented that together these items would restore approximately eight of the ten positions that are being proposed for elimination.

Mr. Archetto seconded the motion.

Mrs. Ciarlo commented that the positions at both East and West are not detrimental to the schools. Administration had a count of how many spaces they had and how much they could do, so she didn't know where all this is coming from unless the committee would choose to have more staff. They are not needed at this particular point in time. Elementary classes are ranging up to twenty-seven, and she won't worry about the high school classes because the students are older and can handle it. With regard to the approximate \$300,000 for elementary textbook replacement, Mrs. Ciarlo stated that it has been almost fifteen years since the district has had a new reading program. Methods have changed since that time. This is the program the district uses to teach

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kids how to read. She asked if the committee would want to say that

the district is using fifteen year old books and materials when the world has changed. She doesn't care if the committee wants to close schools for two weeks during the holidays.

Mr. Lupino commented to Mrs. Ciarlo that she had talked about updating the books and asked if it doesn't go beyond that. He asked if the district has the same program throughout the city or if there are different variations throughout the city. In response, Mrs. Ciarlo said that there is one curriculum for English/language arts at the elementary level. Some of these books have become old and frayed. People have tried to get materials through book fairs, but they still need an approach to teaching reading that is consistent throughout the district, and this is what administration is talking about. Even this is not doing it all. Mr. Lupino commented that the curriculum is consistent throughout the city but the books and materials that are used are not.

Mr. Archetto stated that Mr. Stycos has some commendable ideas, however, he could not support this amendment in its entirety.

Mr. Archetto moved to take each item separately.

Mr. Traficante seconded the motion.

Mr. Palumbo stated that he had no problem taking the items individually. He was against most of them so it didn't matter. The

committee has discussed the student parking fee before, and he believed they discussed it to death. He has nothing against closing schools during the holidays, but there would be a lot of dissent from the parents when the students have to attend school in the summer. With regard to the textbook replacement, he knows the problems with the textbooks and how old they are. He is definitely against waiting at all to replace them. With regard to the teachers, he remembered going over this very carefully with administration when Mrs. Ciarlo said she was taking ten teachers. She gave him the rationale and the figures, and it made sense. She is educationally sound when she says that she is cutting teachers. It would be better to have lower class size in high school, but the district can't afford it. Mrs. Ciarlo is correct; if the district has to cut teachers, then that is where it has to be.

The motion to take each item separately was defeated with Mr. Archetto, Mr. Stycos, and Mr. Traficante in favor; Mrs. Greifer, Ms. Iannazzi, Mr. Lupino, and Mr. Palumbo opposed

Mr. Lupino remarked that these are things the committee is doing at the wrong time. This is not the time to be looking at these items. When the committee gets its bottom line figure from the City Council, that will be the time to look at items such as these. There are some high school students who are looking for any excuse not to go to school, and if they didn't have the \$30 to park and couldn't get to school, and he asked if they would be truant. With regard to closing

schools a second week at Christmas, child care is a problem for many parents. It is basically a tax on parents because the district is not only educating children but also it is responsible for day care. Not everyone has the luxury of having two weeks off at Christmas and are lucky to get one

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week off at Christmas. He didn't agree with this amendment. He couldn't agree with transferring the \$350,000 because he knows how important this reading series is from a personal standpoint.

Mr. Lupino moved to move the question.

Ms. Iannazzi seconded the motion.

Mr. Traficante commented that when he was a City Councilman a young boy by the name of Carmine DePetrillo challenged the City of Cranston about allowing spaces for student parking. The case went to court, and the boy won. Therefore, the City had to provide a portion of spaces for the kids.

This Amendment was defeated with Mr. Stycos in favor; Mr. Archetto, Mrs. Greifer, Ms. Iannazzi, Mr. Lupino, Mr. Palumbo, and Mr. Traficante opposed.

Mr. Stycos moved to have No. 3 and No. 5. Mr. Lupino stated that they had already been presented. Mr. Stycos stated that he was asking for a separate vote on No. 3 and No. 5. Mr. Lupino stated that he couldn't do that; it had already been brought up.

Mr. Lupino stated that the committee has heard him discuss class size reduction. Some people from Orchard Farms School and Hope Highlands School, the more crowded schools in the city, have spoken regarding class size. Mrs. Ciarlo was instrumental a few years ago in trying to reduce class size with class size reduction aides.

Mr. Lupino moved to amend this Resolution to add \$200,000 to the bottom line budget figure for class size reduction aides to be used at the discretion of the Superintendent where it is needed in the district.

Mr. Palumbo seconded the motion.

Mrs. Ciarlo stated that she wished she could vote.

This Amendment was adopted with Mrs. Greifer, Ms. Iannazzi, Mr. Lupino, Mr. Palumbo, and Mr. Traficante in favor; Mr. Archetto and Mr. Stycos were opposed.

Mr. Lupino stated that this does not mean that the district will get it. This is all wishful thinking. Mr. Lupino asked Mr. Balducci for the bottom line figure with this amendment. Mr. Balducci stated that the

budget as revised is \$129,702,156.

Ms. Iannazzi asked if the revisions had been made with the Governor's budget, and Mr. Balducci responded that the revenue had not been adjusted yet. That will be taken care of as they go through the process.

Mr. Stycos moved to cut the budget by \$13,000 by closing an extra week at Christmas and that the committee cut the budget by an additional \$81,000 by using the surplus

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from the 04-05 fiscal year. He commented that the committee could shave \$94,000 off that number.

Mrs. Greifer stated that the committee had already voted against this. Only the prevailing side can ask for reconsideration. Mr. Stycos stated that this is a different proposal. That was a proposal to put the money to high school teachers. This is a proposal merely to cut the bottom number.

Mr. Archetto seconded the motion.

Mrs. Greifer motioned to move the question.

Mr. Traficante seconded the motion.

The motion to move the question was adopted with Mrs. Greifer, Ms. Iannazzi, Mr. Lupino, Mr. Palumbo, and Mr. Traficante in favor; Mr. Archetto and Mr. Stycos were opposed.

The Amendment was defeated with Mrs. Greifer, Ms. Iannazzi, Mr. Lupino, Mr. Palumbo, and Mr. Traficante opposed; Mr. Archetto and Mr. Stycos were in favor.

Mrs. Greifer motioned to move the Resolution.

Mr. Traficante seconded the motion.

The motion to move this Resolution was adopted with Mrs. Greifer, Ms. Iannazzi, Mr. Lupino, Mr. Palumbo, and Mr. Traficante were in favor; Mr. Stycos and Mr. Archetto were opposed.

Mr. Lupino stated that he would entertain a motion to approve an amount to be recommended to the Mayor for the 2006-2007 operating budget for the Cranston Public Schools in the amount of \$129,702,156.

It was moved by Mrs. Greifer, seconded by Mr. Traficante and carried that this Resolution be adopted. Mr. Archetto and Mr. Stycos were

opposed.

V. Public Hearing on Non-agenda Items

Jeff Smith – He stated that his wife is a reading specialist at Cranston East. He wished to speak on behalf of the girls' hockey program. He commended the girls who spoke on behalf of the hockey team. This showed him that sports work. He attended the RI Interscholastic League meeting with Mr. Traficante, Athletic Director. The league's administrators' mission is to increase females' interaction with females as far as playing in sports and the number of teams within the league. He also recognized the great tradition of sports programs in Cranston. However, what he came away with from that meeting is that the league will endorse a program only with the support of the School

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Committee. It is very important that the committee recognizes the power of this committee. He thanked Mrs. Ciarlo for offering her bicycle to the girls.

VI. Adjourn

Moved by Ms. Iannazzi, seconded by Mrs. Greifer and unanimously

carried that the meeting be adjourned.

**There being no further business to come before the meeting, it was
adjourned at**

10:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Anthony J. Lupino

Clerk